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KEEPING A PLEDGE
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HIS PROMISE

General Elections in December

RADIO ADDRESS

by His Excellency the Governor-General
SIR PAUL SCOON

on Thursday 20th September, 1984

Fellow Grenadians and Friends.

This evening I address you on the forthcoming general elections throughout Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique. We have come a long way since the unhappy events of October 1983 and as we reflect soberly on activities of the past eleven months I wish to thank you for your continued vigilance, co-operation, and loyal support. My admiration goes out to the many Grenadians who give generously of their time and talent in community service thus helping not only to strengthen personal relationships but also to lift the social consciousness of our nation. It is upon hard work, tolerance and respect for one another that we must build a united Grenada. I am grateful to our Caribbean and American friends and their governments who continue to help us in the maintenance of law and order while we train our men and women for our Police Force. I am also deeply grateful to the various countries and international and regional organisations which are so generously providing us with aid and technical assistance as we try to improve our skills, to upgrade our infrastructure, to attract foreign capital, and to create new jobs. There are signs of improvement for all to see.

On assuming office the Interim Administration was faced with an unusually grim situation on all fronts and it is to its great credit that it has been able to restore normality in so many spheres of our national life within so short a time. In its determination to get on with the task of economic growth, government has taken steps to attract new private investment, and has succeeded in obtaining massive grants for the completion of the Point Salines Airport and other infra-structural development such as roads, water, and electricity. The process of building is difficult, but I think in the short period available the Interim Government has achieved its goals, and deserves high commendation from the Grenadian people. I wish to thank the Government and the Civil Service for their unswerving loyalty to their country and their devotion to duty.

One of the aims of the Interim Government was the restoration of parliamentary democracy, and from the very outset I gave you a solemn undertaking that parliamentary elections would be held before the end of 1984. Preparations are pro-

ceeding satisfactorily for these elections through the ballot box. The ballot boxes are ready, enumeration of voters has been successfully completed, identification cards are now being distributed and in the next few weeks I shall be issuing the necessary election writs to Returning Officers.

There are some who by their thoughts and actions would like to instil fear and doubt in the minds and hearts of Grenadians in an effort to make us believe that we are not ready for elections. When shall we be ready? Are we any different from our friends in the rest of the Commonwealth Caribbean who go to the polls at regular intervals to elect their government? Our first decade of independence with all its difficulties and anxieties has taught Grenadians many lessons. We have become a resilient people and a people whose learning experiences should prevent us from making the same mistakes again. It is in our hands to make the second decade of independence a period of peace and prosperity. I appeal to all Grenadians to cast away all doubts and fears about the coming elections and go to the polls as a united people, as a courageous people, as a fearless people with the resolve that our country in the next five years will enjoy peace and steady economic growth under the leadership of a government made up of selfless, hardworking, humble and honest men and women who will put their country before self. This election is about the future welfare of the country as a whole. It is about the future of your children. It must bring to the surface the great love deep down in our hearts that we Grenadians have for our country. Do not allow anyone to frighten you by their words or their deeds either now or in the weeks ahead. Grenadians must not be afraid to exercise their democratic rights. Grenadians will not be intimidated. Remember the ballot is a secret one. It is you the people of Grenada who must show the way towards a new beginning, a new dawn, for unity in our country, for more work and less play in government, for high standards of morality in public life, and for greater respect for one another. This is our chance — Let us make use of it. The eyes of the world will be focussed upon us as we approach polling day. Fellow Grenadians I am therefore urging all registered voters to do your duty on election day — that is go

out and vote. Your country, our country, does not ask for more. For the sake of your children's future and in order to regain the confidence and respect of the outside world please go out to vote.

I have great faith in the democratic way of life. I believe in freedom of the individual — freedom of expression, freedom of ownership or possession, freedom of choice, of worship, of movement. This is the democracy we Grenadians cherish. Of course, there are those among us who will abuse our new won freedom. There are those who in their anxiety to satisfy their needs will continue to threaten, to intimidate and to make un-warranted attacks on people in public life. But if we believe in democracy we must be tolerant, we must be forgiving and we must allow people to express themselves even though they may be doing so out of desperation or selfish motives or because of the lust for power. But electioneering campaign must be free of rancour and hatred. I appeal to all prospective candidates and party supporters to concentrate on issues rather than on personalities, and let *truth* be your watchword. You have a tremendous responsibility as you must play your part to ensure that elections are free, fair and peaceful. I intend to invite the Commonwealth, the United Nations, and the Organisation of American States to observe our elections.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have great pleasure in announcing that, after consultations with the Chairman of the Advisory Council, I have decided that General Elections will be held on **Monday 3rd December, 1984**. Fellow Grenadians, it is your responsibility and your privilege to choose a government that will administer the affairs of our country for the next five years. I know you will not shirk your responsibility. The Interim Government has created a climate not only for democratic growth but also for economic and social advance. It is now left to you to go out and vote on Polling Day, Monday 3rd December, 1984.

May God bless you all.